

# NEWS RELEASE

## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

### Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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Presented by Jason P. Miller, Chief of Communications and Community Relations

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### 71 inmates recover from COVID in past 10 days

*115 total inmates have now recovered, while only 9 inmates from just one facility display signs of illness today*

**Dover, DE --** The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) today announced that 115 inmates have recovered from COVID, including 71 inmate who have recovered in just the past 10 days. These recoveries come as the DOC continues its aggressive push to screen, sanitize, isolate and treat the illness across the state's correctional system.

"Currently, there are just 9 inmates who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are symptomatic. 7 are recovering in the COVID Treatment Center at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center and 2 remain at an area hospital," **Commissioner Claire DeMatteis said.** "No inmates from any other correctional facility currently have symptoms of the virus. We continue to contain this disease to just one prison in our state, with the other 8 facilities COVID-free. Inmates in the COVID Treatment Center are receiving excellent, around-the-clock care and are recovering from the virus."

Review an informational chart of COVID-19 recoveries and cases among DOC employees, contracted staff and inmates for each DOC facility [by clicking HERE](#).

New inmate test results since the latest DOC COVID update are as follows:

- **Seven inmates from James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC), including four asymptomatic inmates identified through proactive testing.** All 7 inmates are from a medium security housing unit that has been closely monitored for several weeks, including twice daily temperature checks, and 6 of the 7 were identified through rapid COVID testing on-site that returns test results within 30 minutes. 3 inmates were isolated and tested at the first sign of fever and 4 asymptomatic inmates were proactively isolated and administered a test after having contact with individuals who tested positive for the virus. All 7 inmates are being housed in the JTVCC COVID-19 treatment center.

Additionally, the DOC today announced the following staff test results:

- **One asymptomatic Correctional Officer assigned to Howard R. Young Correctional Institution (HRYCI)** who participated in voluntary staff testing offered by the DOC. The Officer was last on duty 4 days ago - on May 15. The Officer is self-isolating at home and remains asymptomatic.

- **One Correctional Officer assigned to JTVCC.** The Officer was last on duty 3 days ago - on May 16. After beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, the Officers began to self-isolate at home, and as symptoms developed sought medical attention, at which time a COVID-19 test was administered. The Officer is continuing to self-isolate at home.

No additional information will be provided about the identity of the inmates and officers for privacy protection.

The DOC is employing a variety of prevention, screening, cleaning and containment measures to guard against the spread of the novel coronavirus, including:

- All persons, including Officers, administrative staff and probationers who enter any Level V prison, Level IV violation of probation or work release center, or Probation and Parole Office are screened for COVID-19, including a series of questions and a forehead temperature check with a thermometer
- Staff who present with symptoms are sent home to self-quarantine and directed to contact their health care provider.
- Newly arriving inmates are held in isolation for the first 14 days, during which they are carefully monitored, including daily temperature checks with a thermometer.
- DOC has implemented extra daily cleaning of DOC facilities and is using specialized fogging machines to disinfect entire rooms of common areas, housing units and workspaces.
- Face masks are being worn by Correctional Officers and contract healthcare workers as a protection for inmates, Officers and other employees. All Correctional Officers have been wearing face masks since April 10.
- **Face masks have been provided to more than half of DOC's inmate population, including inmates who are in infirmaries, those with compromised immune systems, those with certain institutional jobs, such as food service, all inmates at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center and the Sussex Community Corrections Center and nearly 250 inmates at Howard R. Young Correctional Institution.**
- Most Probationer visits with Probation Officers were transitioned to phone check-ins in March to support social distancing measures.

In addition, the DOC has temporarily suspended in-person prison programming to reduce the movement of people into facilities and movement of groups of people within facilities. Certain programs, including treatment and education programs and religious programming, have been transitioned to a virtual video format. Inmates continue to have outside recreation opportunities within their confined areas and continue to have access to phones to stay in regular contact with their loved ones. DOC is also expanding the use of electronic tablets among the inmate population, where available.

Get updated information about the DOC's response to COVID-19 and read previous announcements of positive COVID-19 cases by visiting <https://doc.delaware.gov>, and follow *decorrection* on Facebook and Twitter.